Television channels in the country

*248. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to curb television channels in the country;

(b) if so, the number of existing television channels, as on date and the number of new channels which have applied for operation to Government;

(c) the existing criteria for granting permission to television channels;

(d) whether Government proposes to bring stringent norms for up-linking and down-linking of channels in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No Sir, however, a reference has been made by this Ministry to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in October 2009. Among other things, TRAI has been requested to examine the maximum number of channels which can be permitted in the country keeping in view available spectrum and transponder capacities as well as technological developments and general practice internationally.

(b) As on date, 512 private satellite TV channels have been permitted under uplinking and downlinking guidelines. Whereas 152 applications are pending for permission to uplink from India and 14 applications are pending for permission to downlink in India.

(c) Detailed eligibility criteria and other requirements for private satellite TV channels have been prescribed in the Guidelines for Uplinking from India and Policy Guidelines for Downlinking of Television Channels. These guidelines are available on the Ministry's website at *http://www.mib.nic.in*.

(d) and (e) TRAI recommendations are awaited.

Financial malpractices in companies

*251. SHRI NANDAMURI HARIKRISHNA:
SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU:

Will the Minister of CORPORATE AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in view of high volatility in the Indian markets due to global economic crisis, the small and medium investors are the worst hit;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in order to overcome the crisis, the companies often resort to manipulation of financial management; and

(c) in what manner his Ministry ensures, through corporate governance and other methods, that no malpractices in financial and other management of a company take place?

THE MINISTER OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID): (a) Investments in equity market are subject to market risk. Investors whether small or big should take informed

investment decisions based on their understanding of the market. The loss or gain that accrues to the investors on account of Market volatility depend on the composition and size of their portfolio and the cost of acquisition of securities.

(b) and (c) Companies Act, 1956 has been amended from time to time for better corporate governance of companies. Some of the amendments *inter alia* includes transparency in annual accounts, setting up of an Audit Committee, Director Responsibility Statement, filing of statutory returns through e-governance mode, introduction of Director Identification Number (DIN) under which identity of authorised directors and professionals are established in a secure manner. Further, Companies Bill, 2009 which has already been introduced in the Parliament and has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee, is based on the principle that law should encourage good corporate governance and includes stringent provisions.

Further Clause 49 of the listing agreement as prescribed by SEBI *inter alia* contains provisions on constitution of independent Audit Committee, role of the Audit Committee and the information to be reviewed by them, disclosures by the Senior Management about material, financial and commercial transactions in which they are interested, CEO/CFO certification on the evaluation of the internal control mechanism. These provisions are made to strengthen the process of financial reporting and minimise the possibilities of malpractices in the management or financial reporting of the companies.

Ministry also encourages Professional Institutions like Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) and Institute of Cost and Works Accountants of India (ICWAI) to organise investors education and awareness programmes to sensitise investors for taking informed decisions while investing in Capital Market. Investor Helpline namely ***www.investorhelpline.in*** and other websites namely ***www.watchoutinvestors.com*** and ***www.iepf.gov.in*** have been launched to create investor awareness and for serving as a knowledge sharing platform in the area of financial literacy as a measure of investor awareness and education.

Supply of coal to thermal power stations in Madhya Pradesh

†*252. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposals have been received to increase the supply of coal to the thermal power stations in Madhya Pradesh and to provide them coal linkage with the mines of the State itself; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon, so far and by when a decision would be taken and approval accorded thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.